



MEMO TO CITY COUNCIL

Request to Include Topic on the City Council Agenda

From: Emily Kane, Deputy City Attorney **Meeting Date:** May 24, 2022
Presenter: Emily Kane, Deputy City Attorney **Estimated Time:** 30 minutes
Topic: Proposed update to animal impound fees

Recommended Council Action:

Authorize staff to: 1) move forward with updating animal impound fees per Idaho Code section 63-1311A; 2) update FY23 agreement with Idaho Humane Society ("IHS") for animal control and shelter services to authorize IHS to collect updated fees and remit them to City; 2) update FY23 IHS agreement to authorize IHS to collect boarding fees, vaccine fees, and veterinary care costs.

Background:

Historically, the City of Meridian has charged the following fees for animal impound:

- 1950: \$1.00 for each impound
- 1975: \$7.00 for each impound
- 1980: \$15.00 for a first impound, \$25 second impound, \$50 third, and \$75 fourth or more
- 1997: \$23.50 for a first impound, \$36 second impound, \$75 third, and \$96 fourth or more
- 2011: \$23.50 for each impound
- 2013: \$10.00 for each impound of a dog and \$12.50 for each impound of a cat

The impound fee has not been changed since 2013. This is the year that the City of Meridian first contracted with IHS for animal control and shelter services. IHS has provided these services to Meridian by contract since that time.

In November 2021, City Council directed staff to work with Idaho Humane Society to, among other things, propose updated fees to better reflect IHS animal control services provided, and to offset the cost of impounding animals found in the City of Meridian.

Due to the variables that make each impound unique, there is no definitive per-dog or per-animal cost for this service. The proposed fee increases incorporate assumptions based on an average impound. In many cases, the cost of services included in the impounding of an animal are greater than reflected in the proposed new fees.

However, the proposed fees are designed to accomplish two objectives. First, pursuant to the criteria for setting fees set forth in Idaho Code section 63-1311, these proposed fees are reasonably related to, and generally do not exceed, the actual cost of the service being

rendered. Second, these fees, while a significant increase from the 2013 fees currently in effect, reflect an amount that will not deter an animal owner from redeeming the animal.

With this criteria and methodology in mind, staff proposes the following updates to the Meridian Police Department fee schedule:

Fee	Description	Current fee	Proposed new fee
Impound fee – dog	Fee to impound a Meridian dog at the IHS facility. <i>Includes these assumptions: 15 minutes of dispatch time; 30 minutes officer travel time to location; 45 minutes officer time to capture dog, interview witnesses, and write report; 30 minutes officer travel time back to IHS facility; 15 minutes officer time to unload and kennel dog; 15 minutes administrative time to process dog into shelter, attempt to locate and notify owner, and prepare records.</i>	\$10.00	\$50.00
Impound fee – vicious dog or bite case	Fee to impound a Meridian dog at the IHS facility, where the dog has bitten a person, and/or is reported to be vicious. <i>Includes these assumptions: 15 minutes of dispatch time; 30 minutes officer travel time to location; 120 minutes officer time to capture dog, interview witnesses, collect evidence, and write report; 30 minutes officer travel time back to IHS facility; 15 minutes officer time to unload and kennel dog; 90 minutes administrative time to process dog into shelter, attempt to locate and notify owner, and prepare records.</i>	\$10.00	\$75.00
Impound fee – cat	Fee to impound a Meridian cat at the IHS facility. <i>IHS does not usually pick up cats unless they are sick, injured, or as needed for public safety; 87% of cats entering the IHS facility are usually captured by members of the public and dropped off. This fee reflects an average cost to account for both situations, given that both situations involve administrative time to process the cat into the shelter.</i>	\$12.50	\$15.00
Impound fee – livestock	Fee to impound Meridian livestock at the IHS facility. <i>Includes these assumptions: 15 minutes of dispatch time; 15 minutes x 2 officers to prepare livestock trailer for transport; 30 minutes x 2 officers travel time to location; 120 minutes x 2 officers time to capture animal, interview witnesses, and write reports; 30 minutes officer travel time back to IHS facility; 30 minutes x 2 officers time to unload and corral animal; 30 minutes administrative time to process animal into shelter, attempt to locate and notify owner, and prepare records.</i>	N/A	\$150.00